



State of Rhode Island
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Shepard Building
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Enclosure 5a6
December 8, 2020

Angélica Infante-Green
Commissioner

December 8, 2020

TO: Members of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education

FROM: Angélica Infante-Green, Commissioner *A. Infante*

RE: **Providence Preparatory Charter School – Proposal for a New Charter**

In accordance to R.I.G.L. §16-77.3-3, proposals for a new charter require the action of the Council of Elementary and Secondary Education. Further, when considering the overall merits of a proposed charter, R.I.G.L. § 16-77.3-3 requires the Council to place substantial weight on the fiscal impact on the city or town, programmatic impact on the sending school district, and the educational impact on the students in the sending district to ensure that the proposal is economically prudent for the city or town, and academically prudent for the proposed sending school district and for all students in the sending district.

RIDE, in partnership with the external evaluator SchoolWorks, has conducted an in-depth review of the proposed charter, including Providence Preparatory Charter School's (PVD Prep) proposed academic model, public feedback, and the impact that the proposed charter would have on local communities. RIDE has concluded that the proposal submitted by PVD Prep is both academically and economically prudent, and will result in high-quality academic opportunities for Rhode Island's students.

The quality of the proposed school program and the potential of the program to guide strong student outcomes determines the recommendation for preliminary approval. Final approval is contingent on completion of all required pre-opening items, which include operational aspects of opening a school, as well as addressing outstanding key concerns from the initial charter review. It is important to note that preliminary approval does not guarantee final approval. While not guaranteed, RIDE anticipates presenting the charter for final approval in the spring of 2021 to open in the fall of 2021.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education moves to grant preliminary approval to Providence Preparatory Charter School's proposal for a new charter to open in school year 2021-2022; with final approval contingent on the completion of all pre-opening requirements and conditions established by the Rhode Island Department of Education.

Enclosed Documents:

The following documents provide further detail regarding the Commissioner's recommendation and analysis contributing to that recommendation:

- Commissioner's Recommendation Overview and a detailed overview of PVD Prep's proposal
- Summary of the quality evaluation for the proposal
- Providence Prep's Response to the Commissioner's recommendation
- RIDE's local impact analysis (educational, programmatic, and fiscal) for Providence
- Any local impact analyses submitted by the public pertaining to the proposal at hand
- Review of the financial records of the establishing entity, Center for Dynamic Learning, and the financial plan for PVD Prep by the Office of the Auditor General

Telephone (401)222-4600 **Fax** (401)222-6178 **TTY** (800)745-5555 **Voice** (800)745-6575 **Website:** www.ride.ri.gov

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Providence Preparatory Charter School
Commissioner's Recommendation & Proposal Overview
Commissioner's Recommendation: Preliminary Approval

Summary of Proposal

Proposed Charter Overview			
Charter Type:	Independent	Year Opening:	2021-22
Location of School:	Providence	Grade Level (At-Scale):	5-8
Enrolling Communities:	Providence	Enrollment (At-Scale):	252

School Mission & Model	
School Mission:	"The mission of PVD Prep is to prepare a diverse group of Providence middle school students for success in college-preparatory secondary schools."
School Model:	PVD Prep proposes to open a 5-8 school that will serve a small, racially and economically diverse group of students in Providence. The school will implement a co-teaching model as well as instructional methods and strategies that reflect best practices seen in high performing urban charter schools.

Proposed Enrollment			
Charter Year	School Year	Cohorts	Total Student Enrollment
Year 1	2021-22	5, 6	126
Year 2	2022-23	5, 6, 7	189
Year 3 (At-Scale)	2023-24	5-8	252

Overview of Public Comment	
Public Comment Period	September 29, 2020 to December 1, 2020
Public Hearings	Two public hearings were held virtually via Zoom for PVD Prep: 1) October 27, 2020; 2) November 18, 2020
Summary of Received Public Comments	RIDE received 71 spoken and written comments during the public comment period. Of the 71 received public comments, 68 comments (96%) supported the proposal, 2 comments (3%) opposed the proposal, and 1 comment (1%) neither supported nor opposed.



Providence Preparatory Charter School **Commissioner's Recommendation & Proposal Overview** **Commissioner's Recommendation: Preliminary Approval**

Overview of Commissioner's Recommendation

Summary of Recommendation	
Recommended Action:	<p>The Commissioner recommends that the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education move to grant <u>preliminary approval</u> to Providence Preparatory Charter School's proposal. Final approval is contingent on the completion of all pre-opening requirements and conditions established by the Rhode Island Department of Education.</p>
Key Recommendation Drivers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As verified by SchoolWorks, an independent, nationally recognized reviewer, the PVD Prep applicant group has presented an educational model guided by a clear, measurable mission that has strong potential to meet the needs of students in the Providence area. • The applicant group articulates clear plans for identifying and supporting struggling students, Multilingual Learners, and differently-abled students. • The applicant group identifies and describes course offerings and planned curriculum for each grade that are evidence-based, aligned to Common Core, and have an effectiveness rating from Ed Reports. • The applicant group has garnered community support as evidenced by several letters of support from various community members (including Providence Public Schools' teachers). • The financial plan shows surpluses on a year-to-year basis beginning in Year 1, which will allow the school to build reserves and remain solvent. • The application was rated "yes" on 68.2% of the application standards, and "mostly" for 27.3% of the application standards evaluated by SchoolWorks in the quality evaluation. It did not meet 4.5% of the application standards (one standard). • <u>Family Demand</u>: For the 2020-21 school year, there were 2,764 applications received from students in grades 5-8 who reside in Providence . Only 112 seats were offered to these applicants. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Out of all the students in Providence in grades 5-8 who applied to a charter school in 2020, 4% were offered a charter school seat. ○ At-scale, PVD Prep's enrollment represents 0.9% of students enrolled in Providence Public Schools in 2020-21. ○ According to March 2020 charter lottery data, 47% of more than 10,000 unique applications for charter school seats were applications from Providence families. • The Commissioner recommends that the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education grant preliminary approval to the PVD Prep proposal. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prior to final approval, the PVD Prep applicant group must complete required conditions and all pre-opening deliverables. RIDE anticipates the PVD Prep applicant group will complete all required conditions to open in 2021-22. ○ Preliminary approval enables the applicant group to begin implementation of the proposal while allowing RIDE to both support and hold the applicant group accountable for final approval. Following is a summary of the regulatory and operational requirements for applicant groups to gain final approval.



Providence Preparatory Charter School
Commissioner's Recommendation & Proposal Overview
Commissioner's Recommendation: Preliminary Approval

Required Actions for Final Approval

Adherence to charter regulatory requirements is mandated per statute for final approval. In addition to regulatory requirements, the following proposed conditions are intended to address essential concerns identified by the application review committee. The applicant team must meet all regulatory requirements and Council approved conditions prior to final approval.

Summary of Recommendations for Conditions	Summary of RIDE's Concerns with Evaluation	RIDE Required Condition for Approval
Condition A:	The applicant group proposes a lottery that is weighted toward students who attend CSI-designated schools; however, they did not describe the weighted categories nor did they include a variance request.	The school must draft a lottery and enrollment policy that conforms to charter school regulations 200-RICR-20-05-2, section 2.6.2 and submit it to RIDE for approval by January 15, 2021. Additionally, the school must request its lottery weight for approval, including details of how the weight will be identified and used. Finally, the school must be included on the charter common application.
Condition B:	The applicant group did not submit the complete RIDE financial plan template (specifically the 'Enrollment Estimates' tab).	In accordance with charter school regulations 200-RICR-20-05-2, section 2.2.4(B)2, the applicant group must submit complete financial plans and templates to RIDE and the Auditor General by January 29, 2021.
Condition C:	The applicant group has provided a description of how the Board will oversee the school leader, but does not clearly indicate the plan or process for the Board to maintain academic oversight of the school.	In accordance with charter school regulations 200-RICR-20-05-2, section 2.2.4(B)3, the school must submit an evaluation protocol for how the Board will provide academic oversight of the school to RIDE by January 29, 2021.
Condition D:	The applicant group does not have a facility identified or secured.	In accordance with charter school regulations 200-RICR-20-05-2, section 2.2.4(B)7, the school must have an appropriate building (permanent or temporary) for operating the school. RIDE requires that the school have a facility secured by April 15, 2021.



**Providence Preparatory Charter School
Commissioner's Recommendation & Proposal Overview
Commissioner's Recommendation: Preliminary Approval**

Charter Regulatory Requirements for Final Charter Approval

The charter school regulations 200-RICR-20-05-2, section 2.2.4(B) specify tasks that must be satisfactorily completed for a proposed charter to obtain final approval.

2.2.4(B)1.	File and obtain approval of articles of incorporation by the Rhode Island Office of the Secretary of State
2.2.4(B)2.	Review and approval of the business plan, financial management procedures, and other relevant financial information by the Rhode Island Office of the Auditor General.
2.2.4(B)3.	Establish governance structure (i.e. board of trustees, board of directors, etc.) to provide proper governance and oversight of school operations.
2.2.4(B)4.	Hire a qualified chief administrator (i.e. Head of School, Executive Director, Chief Executive Officer) to oversee day-to-day operations.
2.2.4(B)5.	Updated staffing plan designed to put in place a faculty that clearly meets student need and is consistent with the school's program design.
2.2.4(B)6.	Provide evidence that 50% of its first-year enrollment is willing to enroll if the school opens the following school year.
2.2.4(B)7.	The school must have identified an appropriate building (permanent or temporary) for operating the school.
2.2.4(B)8.	Develop a final charter.

Request for Proposals for New Student Seats: **Evaluator's Guide**

Office of Charter Schools

Rhode Island Department of Education

2020 Review of New Seat Proposals: New Schools

Comment Summary Sheet

Name of Charter Proposal: Providence Preparatory Charter School

Evaluator Name: Jay Adams

Date Completed: November 20, 2020

Summary of Comments			
Does this section meet the overall standard of quality?	NO	MOSTLY	YES
1. Cover Sheet			
2. Executive Summary			
3. Mission Statement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4. Proposed New Students and Enrollment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5. Goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6. Community Need and Support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7. Educational Program			
a. Guiding Principles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Curriculum and Coursework	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Learning Environment and Pedagogy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Specific Populations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e. Assessment System	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f. Promotion/Graduation Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. School Culture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8. Organizational Capacity			
a. Establishing Persons or Entities and	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Applicant Groups			
c. Board Development and Duties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Staffing Plans,	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e. Leadership, and			
f. Teachers			
g. Management Organizations/Essential Partners and	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h. Family-School Partnership			
9. Facilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Operations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11. Finance and Budget	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Schedule and Calendar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
13. Start-up Timeline	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
14. Variances	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Charter School Program Intent to Apply	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appendix A: Required Attachments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Overall Submission	NO	MOSTLY	YES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the proposal adhere to all formatting and submission criteria, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One-inch margins? 12-point font? A table of contents that references all sections of the narrative and all attachments? Page numbers on each page, including on attachments? 70 pages double-spaced, excluding attachments? 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
A. Is the request free of typographical and grammatical errors?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
B. Are citations used for all references and/or excerpts? (Footnotes requested as a citation style)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Upon evaluating the quality of the submitted proposal, interview, and the performance tasks, SchoolWorks recommends that the Rhode Island Department of Education consider recommending for approval the proposal submitted by Providence Preparatory Charter School.

SchoolWorks acknowledges that the Commissioner's final recommendation to the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education will consist of a review of SchoolWorks' ratings, feedback, and recommendation regarding the quality of the proposal, a review of public comment, and a review of a local impact analysis.

Essential Strengths of the proposal:

- The applicant has included a measurable mission statement in the proposal, "to prepare a diverse group of middle school students for success in college-prep high schools," and provides two measures to indicate how the school will know the mission has been accomplished.
- The applicant has outlined a recruitment process for students in the Providence area that includes outreach in the form of social media, news outlets, radio advertisement, and communication with local nonprofit organizations and community members.
- The applicant has provided a clear plan to identify and support differently-abled students. The applicant lists assessments, services, and an assurance to follow all federal and State guidelines.
- The applicant also lists the curricular choices for English Language Arts (ELA), math, science, and humanities and provides a brief description of each choice.
- The applicant also provides a clear description of how the proposed school will monitor ongoing achievement via interim and common assessments, as well as daily exit ticket data and teachers' observations of students.
- The application budget does not appear to underfund any areas that would preclude the applicant group from successfully implementing the operational plan presented. Based on the plan presented (RIDE template), the school would not be in jeopardy of becoming insolvent or suffer from liquidity issues. The financial plan currently shows the school ending Year 1 (\$159K) through Year 5 (\$145K), with the exception of Year 2 (\$92k) with six-figure net incomes. Those surpluses on a year-to-year-basis would allow the school to build a healthy reserve and remain solvent year to year.

Essential Concerns with the proposal:

- The applicant has provided a description of how the Board will oversee the school leader but does not clearly indicate the plan or process for the Board to maintain academic oversight of the school. Specifically, the Board stated it plans to evaluate the Head of School using a set of criteria and plans to request monthly reports from

the Head of School, but neither states how the school’s academic data will be scrutinized nor how academic goals will be determined for each school year.

- The applicant states it is currently working with a real estate professional to determine a location for the school site and has filed a letter of intent to occupy a commercial building, but does not have any estimates on the cost of renovations to the building.
- The applicant did not submit the complete RIDE financial plan template. That tab generates revenues that are plugged in/link to the five-year budget tab. There is no way to verify that the revenues driven by student enrollment are accurate; the file submitted by the applicant has hard-coded numbers and no reference to the estimates tab.
- The applicant states it plans to recruit middle school students from specific neighborhoods within upper and lower Providence and further states its intent to offer weighted categories for students currently enrolled at schools designated as “in need of improvement” by the State Department of Education. While the applicant does provide a description of the weighted categories in the enrollment package, the applicant and has not included a request for a variance within the proposed application.

By signing this Comment Cover Sheet, I hereby declare that I have reviewed and commented on the aforementioned request for charter school expansion, and that I have no known conflicts of interest with the individuals submitting the request.

Paige Gonzalez

Signature

11/20/2020

Date

December 4, 2020

Angélica Infante-Green
Commissioner
Rhode Island Department of Elementary & Secondary Education
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Re: Applicant Response, Recommendation for Preliminary Approval to Providence Preparatory Charter School

Dear Commissioner Infante-Green:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this written response to your recommendation that the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education grant preliminary approval to Providence Preparatory Charter School's (PVD Prep) proposal.

We are honored to receive the Commissioner's recommendation for authorization.

As you know, we are proposing to open a new, college preparatory charter middle school that would serve 252 learners from across Providence. Our school would open with grades five and six and grow one grade per year until reaching full capacity as a fifth through eighth grade middle school in the 2023-2024 school year.

If authorized, PVD Prep would offer a small, family like school culture based on the homeroom model; a longer school day and year-round school calendar; honors-level seminars each day with an hour/day of individualized academic acceleration; quarterly "signature experiences" in each grade level each year, and; deep partnerships with parents and families that includes frequent home visits and daily communications.

We are honored that RIDE and the SchoolWorks review team identified that our proposal has "presented an educational model guided by a clear, measurable mission that has strong potential to meet the needs of students in the Providence area." We appreciate that the review team highlighted our "clear plans for identifying and supporting struggling students, multilingual learners and differently-abled students," our "curriculum for each grade that is evidence-based and aligned to common core," and our "financial plan that shows surpluses on a year-to-year basis." We are grateful for these votes of confidence in our school's proposed model.

We are prepared to meet the regulatory requirements for final charter approval, including the four specific conditions that RIDE requires of our proposal. As described in further detail on the following page, our team is prepared to:

- Draft a lottery and enrollment policy that conforms to charter school regulations by January 15, 2021.
- Submit a revised financial template to RIDE and the Auditor General by January 29, 2021.
- Submit an evaluation protocol for how the Board of Directors will provide academic oversight to PVD Prep by January 29, 2021.
- Secure care and control of an appropriate school facility by April 15, 2021.

December 4, 2020

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Applicant Response, Recommendation for Preliminary Approval to Providence Preparatory Charter School

Lottery and enrollment. Our school seeks to serve a racially and economically diverse group of Providence middle school students from across our city's many neighborhoods. We have proposed to provide a lottery weight to prospective students who wish to enroll at Providence Prep from CSI identified elementary or middle schools in the City of Providence. Our school's founding team is experienced with successfully managing student recruitment, lottery and enrollment processes. We will submit a lottery and enrollment policy that conforms to charter school regulations 200-RICR-20-05-2, section 2.6.2(c). We are prepared to submit for approval a formal request regarding our lottery weighting and we would be pleased to be included on the charter common application.

Financial plans and templates. Our school has developed a realistic five-year budget model that aligns assumed public revenue sources with reasonably priced expenditures in several categories of school operation. We appreciate the opportunity to review this model in January, when we will have further clarity on both key revenue sources (i.e. the charter school planning grant program) and key costs (i.e. facility related costs, described further below). We note again that our founding team is experienced with successfully managing school finances and meeting the reporting requirements of RIDE's Uniform Chart of Accounts. We look forward to submitting a revised financial plan that satisfies the requirements of charter school regulations of 200-RICR-20-05-2, Section 2.2.4(B)2.

Board evaluation protocol for academic oversight. Our Founding Board of Directors takes seriously its role in providing academic oversight to our proposed school. We understand that our Board of Directors is ultimately responsible for school performance, including but not limited to academic outcomes. We will work with our peer schools, RIDE staff and others in providing a robust evaluation protocol that satisfies the requirements of charter school regulations of 200-RICR-20-05-2, Section 2.2.4(B)3.

Facility. Finally, our team understands the critical importance of identifying a suitable school facility for use. We are pleased to share that we have signed a Letter of Intent to lease a school facility that we are confident would satisfy the charter school regulations of 200-RICR-20-05-2, section 2.2.4(B)7. We look forward to working with RIDE to ensure that we meet this important milestone by April 15, 2021.

Thank you again for considering the Commissioner's recommendation for preliminary authorization. We look forward to partnering with the Board of Education, with RIDE and with students and families in Providence to provide an excellent new school option in the 2021-2022 school year.

Sincerely,

Delia Rodriguez-Masjoan
Chair, Providence Preparatory Charter School Board of Directors

Toby Shepherd
Proposed Founding Head of School



PVD Prep
Local Impact Analysis for New Charter Request
Local Community: Providence

Proposal Overview

Proposed Charter Overview			
Charter Type:	Independent	Year Opening:	2021-22
Location of School:	Providence	Grade Level (At-Scale):	5-8
Enrolling Communities:	Providence	Enrollment (At-Scale):	252

Summary of Proposal
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sponsored by the Center for Dynamic Learning, and after-school program that serves the South Side of Providence• Proposes a college-preparatory middle school that will serve a small, racially and economically diverse group of learners• Proposes a lottery that is weighted toward students who attend schools with a Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) designation

Proposed Enrollment			
Charter Year	School Year	Grades	Total Student Enrollment
Year 1	2021-22	5-6	126
Year 2	2022-23	5-7	189
Year 3 (At-Scale)	2023-24	5-8	252
Year 4	2024-25	5-8	252
Year 5	2025-26	5-8	252

Enrollment Assumptions & Comparisonⁱ

Demographics of Enrolling Communities		
Demographics (%)	Providence	State Avg.
Economically Disadvantaged	84.5%	47.7%
Multi-Lingual Learners	33.1%	10.7%
Differently-abled students	14.7%	15.7%
Minority students	91.8%	44.8%



PVD Prep Local Impact Analysis for New Charter Request Local Community: Providence

How does the charter's projected enrollment fit within the overall portfolio of Providence students?	
Enrollment Category	Student Enrollment
Total # of students enrolled in Providence Public School District (PPSD)	23,836
PVD Prep's at-scale enrollment as a % of PPSP's enrollment	1.1%
Total # of students residing in Providence ⁱⁱ	29,650
PVD Prep's at-scale enrollment as a % of total # of students residing in Providence	0.9%

Educational & Programmatic Impact Analysisⁱⁱⁱ

2019 RICAS Grades Performance Comparison

RICAS Results	English Language Arts (% Meets & Exceeds)			Mathematics (% Meets & Exceeds)		
	Proposed Charter	Providence	State	Proposed Charter	Providence	State
Grade 5	-	19.9	39.1	-	12.9	30.1
Grade 6	-	18.0	39.1	-	12.2	27.9
Grade 7	-	8.6	31.5	-	8.0	27.6
Grade 8	-	14.9	36.3	-	7.0	24.5

2019 RICAS Subgroup Performance Comparison

RICAS Results All Tested Grades Demographic Breakdown	English Language Arts (% Meets/Exceeds)				Mathematics (% Meets/Exceeds)			
	All	Econ Disadv.	Multi-Lingual	Differently-abled	All	Econ Disadv.	Multi-Lingual	Differently-abled
Proposed Charter	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Providence	17.2	15.2	5.5	11.4	11.9	10.4	**	**
State	36.5	22.5	7.9	6.1	29.8	15.7	6.3	5.0

Student Demand Analysis for Grade 5-8 Charter Seats ^{iv}	
Number of 2020-21 Charter Applications for grades 5-8 from Students Residing in Providence:	2,764
Number of 2020-21 Charter seats offered for grades 5-8 from Students Residing in Providence:	112
What % of 2020-21 Providence 5-8 lottery applicants were offered a seat?	4%



PVD Prep Local Impact Analysis for New Charter Request Local Community: Providence

Fiscal Impact Analysis

Educational funding dollars follow each child to the school of their choice. The following analysis projects the total amount of funding that would follow students to the school of their choice, commensurate with the size of the requested expansion.

Providence Student Funding Projections	Projected Per-Pupil Funding
Local Share – Projected FY21 per-pupil funding for each Providence student ^v	\$4,570 per-pupil
State Share – Projected FY21 per-pupil funding for each Providence student ^{vi}	\$11,806 per-pupil
Federal Share – Projected FY21 per-pupil funding for each Providence student ^{vii}	\$2,000 per-pupil
Projected FY21 total per-pupil funding for each Providence Student (i.e. RIDE projects this amount of total local + state federal per-pupil funding for each Providence student in FY21)	\$18,376 per-pupil
Less: 7% withheld from the local share of per pupil funding for “fixed or unique” costs ^{viii}	\$320 per-pupil
Local Share – Projected FY21 per-pupil funding for each Providence student, less the 7% withheld for “fixed or unique” costs	\$4,250 per-pupil
Projected FY21 total per-pupil funding for each Providence Student (excluding funds withheld for “fixed or unique costs”)	\$18,056 per-pupil

Total Pupil Funding Projections, Commensurate with New School Proposal:

Fiscal Year	Proposed Charter Projected Enrollment	Projected Total Local Share Pupil Funding commensurate with the requested new charter proposal	Projected Total Local Share Pupil Funding as % of PVD FY19 Total Expenditures ^{ix}	Projected Total Pupil Funding (Local+State+ Federal) commensurate with the requested new charter proposal	Projected Total Withholding for Fixed or Unique Costs (to district)
FY 2021-22 (Opening)	126	\$535,500	0.12%	\$2,275,056	\$40,320
FY 2022-23	189	\$803,250	0.18%	\$3,412,584	\$60,480
FY 2023-24 (at-scale)	252	\$1,071,000	0.24%	\$4,550,112	\$80,640

Key implication: RIDE projects on an annual basis by FY2023-24, commensurate with the new school proposal reaching full enrollment at-scale, total funding of \$4,550,112. \$1,071,000 of this \$4,550,112 will be contributed through local share funding. This \$1,071,000 represents 0.24% of PPSD’s total reported FY19 expenditures.



PVD Prep Local Impact Analysis for New Charter Request Local Community: Providence

ⁱ Enrollment Assumptions and Comparison based off 10/1/19 reported data publicly available through RIDE's FRED database.

ⁱⁱ Inclusive of independent and catholic schools as available through RIDE's FRED database.

ⁱⁱⁱ Academic Outcome data is based off published assessment results for 2019 available through the public Rhode Island Assessment Data Portal. *Data is suppressed to ensure confidentiality because the minimum reporting size requirement (10 students) is not met. **Data is suppressed to ensure confidentiality because greater than 95% of students did not meet expectations.

^{iv} Demand analysis is based on the most recent lottery data available through the RIDE Charter School Applicant Report. Reporting sizes of less than 10 are suppressed for student privacy.

^v Assumes constant Local per-pupil funding, net of a constant withholding for fixed or unique costs.

^{vi} Assumes constant state per-pupil funding.

^{vii} Federal funding assumed constant and based off district averages.

^{viii} Withholding for fixed or unique costs is the greater of either: 1) 7% of the per-pupil local share funding; or, 2) the per-pupil value of the districts' fixed or unique costs district's statutorily defined expenditure categories minus the average expenses incurred by all public schools of choice for those same categories of expenses. Assumed constant in projections.

^{ix} Total FY19 PPSD Expenditures: \$438,019,645 (all expenditures based on most recent, audited UCOA data)

Providence Preparatory Charter School Local Impact Analysis

Provided by Kenneth Wong, Ph.D.
Walter and Leonore Annenberg Professor for Education Policy
Director, Urban Education Policy Program
Brown University

October 25, 2020

Rhode Island Board of Education
c/o Angela Texeira
Special Assistant to the Commissioner of Elementary
& Secondary Education and
Liaison to the Board of Education
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Dear colleagues:

When considering the authorization of new charter public schools, Rhode Island General Law §16-77.3-3(f) directs the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education to “*place substantial weight on the fiscal impact on the city or town; programmatic impact on the sending school district; and the educational impact on the students in the district to ensure that the proposal is economically prudent for the city or town and academically prudent for the proposed sending school district and for all students in the sending district.*” I have been asked by the founding group behind Providence Preparatory Charter School to submit this analysis to assist members of the Council in considering these impacts. I am pleased to share my findings with you below.

Summary of Proposal

The mission of Providence Preparatory Charter School is to prepare a diverse group of Providence middle school students for success in college-preparatory secondary schools. As proposed, PVD Prep would be a college-preparatory, charter middle school proposing to serve a small, racially and economically diverse group of learners from across the City of Providence. PVD Prep proposes a small-by-design school, with co-taught classes, quarterly expeditionary learning experiences, evidence-based curricula, a year-round calendar, daily academic interventions and a warm, safe and family-like school culture. PVD Prep’s proposed learning community – students, staff and Board members alike – would be racially and economically diverse, proudly representing the diversity of Providence’s many neighborhoods. The school’s proposed eight-and-a-half-hour school day and 220+ day school year would allow for significantly more academic intervention and enrichment than the typical school year. Along with proposing to use high quality, evidence-based materials across the curriculum, PVD Prep also seeks to partner closely with families through home visits, daily text messages and other forms of communication. PVD Prep proposes assess frequently and offer one hour each day of personalized intervention and support and each grade at PVD Prep will participate in four “signature experiences” per school year.

PVD Prep proposes to serve Providence students in grades five, six, seven and eight. PVD Prep proposes to serve 63 students per grade, for a total of 252 students. PVD Prep proposes to open with

grades five and six in the 2021-2022 school year and phase in one grade per year in each of the successive two years. The school's proposed enrollment plan is shown below.

Proposed Enrollment			
Charter Year	School Year	Cohorts	Total Student Enrollment
Year 1	2021 – 2022	1 & 2	126
Year 2	2022 – 2023	1, 2 & 3	189
Year 3 (at scale)	2023 – 2024	1, 2, 3 & 4	252
Year 4	2024 – 2025	2, 3, 4 & 5	252
Year 5	2025 – 2026	3, 4, 5, & 6	252

Demographics of Enrolling Community		
Demographics (%)	Providence	State Average
Economically Disadvantaged	84.36%	47.36%
Multi-Lingual Learners	29.37%	9.54%
Differently-abled students	15.43%	15.63%
Minority students	91.41%	43.43%

How does the charter's projected enrollment fit within the overall portfolio of Providence schools?	
Enrollment Category	Student Enrollment¹
Total # of students enrolled in Providence Public School District	23,836
PVD Prep's at-scale enrollment as a % of PPSD's enrollment	1%
Total # of students residing in Providence, inclusive of independent, parochial schools and homeschooled students	25,234
PVD Prep's at-scale enrollment as a % of total # of students residing in Providence	.9%

PVD Prep's proposed at-scale enrollment of 252 students would represent 4.6% of Providence's 2019 middle school enrollment.

Family demand for charter school seats, as measured by applications received per available seat, remains strong. PVD Prep could provide an alternative option for families seeking charter school enrollment.

¹ October 1, 2019 Enrollment Data as available from RIDE FRED Database

Student Demand Analysis for Middle Level Grade Charter Seats²	
# of 2019-20 applications for enrollment, grades 5, 6, 7 and 8 statewide	903
# of 2019-20 available seats, grades 5, 6, 7 and 8 statewide	101
Ratio of available middle level charter seats to applications statewide	9:1

Section I: Fiscal impact on the City or Town

Pursuant to Rhode Island's school funding formula, educational funding dollars follow each K-12 child to the schools of choice. This includes career & technical programs within and between school districts, statewide schools and public charter schools. The table below illustrates the funding projections used by the charter applicant in developing their proposed five-year budget model.

Providence student funding projections	Projected per-pupil funding
Local share - Estimated per-pupil funding, FY22	\$4,050
State share - Estimated per-pupil funding, FY22	\$10,750
Federal share - Estimated per-pupil funding, FY22	\$1,250
Total projected per-pupil funding, FY22	\$16,050

Fiscal Year	Proposed Enrollment	Total Projected Local Share	Total Projected Per-Pupil Funding
FY22	126	\$ 510,300.00	\$2,022,300.00
FY23	189	\$ 765,450.00	\$3,033,450.00
FY24	252	\$1,020,600.00	\$4,044,600.00
FY25	252	\$1,051,218.00 <i>Assuming 3% increase</i>	\$4,165,938.00 <i>Assuming 3% increase</i>
FY26	252	\$1,082,754.54 <i>Assuming 3% increase</i>	\$4,290,916.14 <i>Assuming 3% increase</i>

We note here several points regarding PVD Prep's fiscal impact on the City of Providence.

First, because of its small size PVD Prep's projected local share upon opening would represent less than half of one percent of Providence Public Schools' approximately \$385 million annual expenditures. Indeed, between 2014-15 and 2018-19 the District spent more nearly \$16,500 *more* on textbooks for students who attend parochial schools outside of the district than we estimate PVD Prep's total projected local share upon opening.³

Secondly, we note that unlike a statewide school of choice or a charter school with a regional catchment area, PVD Prep's proposed enrollment pattern would keep school funding within the

² 2019-2020 Charter Lottery Report, Rhode Island League of Charter Schools. This analysis was computed by selecting only middle grade applicants to charter schools that serve Providence residents.

³ Providence School Department, 2018-2019 Proposed Local Budget, 5 year comparison by object code

portfolio of public schools serving Providence students. In this way, PVD Prep’s fiscal impact to the City be comparable to the District opening a new middle school.

Finally, we note here that the State of Rhode Island assumed control of the Providence Public School District (“PPSD”) on November 1st, 2019. As detailed in the October “Order of Control and Reconstitution,” the City of Providence has been relieved of all powers and authorities over “budget, program and personnel” relating to Providence schools.⁴ Accordingly, addressing the fiscal impact of new charter school seats on the City of Providence now rests with the Commissioner of Elementary & Secondary Education. Providence Mayor Jorge Elorza affirmed this interpretation in a September 30th Boston Globe article regarding proposed new charter school seats noting that “not having to take into account the finances and how we’re going to balance the budget” changes how the City evaluates proposed new charter school seats.⁵

Section 2: Educational & Programmatic Impact Analysis⁶

Academic impact: The chart below displays the percentage of students who demonstrated math and language arts proficiency in Providence middle schools as measured by the 2018-2019 Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS). As demonstrated, only approximately 11% of Providence’s 5,418 students demonstrate proficiency in math and/or language arts.

% Meeting or Exceeding Expectations, 2018-19 RICAS			
<i>School</i>	<i>Enrollment</i>	<i>ELA</i>	<i>Math</i>
Esek Hopkins Middle School	566	13%	7%
Nathan Bishop Middle School	695	18%	13%
Gilbert Stuart Middle School	945	8.5%	<5%
Nathanael Greene Middle School	988	26%	20%
Roger Williams Middle School	787	9%	<5%
Governor Christopher DelSesto Middle School	942	7%	5.3%
West Broadway Middle School	495	10%	8%

PVD Prep has set internal school goals that are benchmarked to Rhode Island’s high performing public middle schools that, if achieved and averaged across its four grade levels, would outperform Providence middle schools by 56 and 68 percentage points in ELA and math respectively.⁷

⁴ State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, Commissioner of Education In re: Providence Public School District: RIDE No. 19-089

⁵ McGowan, Daniel. *Why Mayor Elorza changed his tune on charter schools in Providence*. September 30, 2020. Boston Globe

⁶ In November of 2016, the Rhode Island Innovative Policy Lab provided a “Memo for Charter Fiscal Impacts” to RIDE Commissioner Ken Wagner regarding a proposed charter school expansion in Rhode Island. This section applies similar methodology to the PVD Prep proposal.

⁷ Providence Preparatory Charter School proposal, page 14

Impact on overcrowding: We note briefly that several Providence middle schools suffer from “overcrowding.” Across the District’s seven public middle schools, 2018-2019 actual enrollment exceeded the LEA reported capacity of each building by an average of 122%.⁸ We note here as well that Providence Prep has not yet identified a facility for its school. Because charter schools typically pay facility costs out of their per-pupil funding, we do not anticipate that PVD Prep would have any direct impact on PPSP’s existing facility assets.

Other long-term impacts: Finally, we note here that in *The Effect of School Choice on Intrinsic Motivation and Academic Outcomes*, economists Hastings, Neilson, and Zimmerman estimated that admission to high performing charter schools is correlated with improved rates of math and language arts proficiency. In a November 2016 local impact analysis regarding charter school expansion in Rhode Island, the Rhode Island Innovative Policy Lab converted this student level standard deviation to a student growth percentile to predict long-term impacts on outcomes like college going rates and lifetime earnings. Citing methodology from a 2014 publication from Chetty, Friedman and Rockoff, the Rhode Island Innovative Policy Lab concluded that a single year of attendance at a high performing charter school may result in both increased earnings and improved college going rates for graduates.

Section 3: Conclusion

Our analysis demonstrates that Providence families may benefit from a new middle school option. Demand for middle school seats at Providence charter schools outstrips availability by a ratio of 9 to 1. Providence’s existing middle school facilities are overutilized, on average, by more than 20%. As of 2018-19, the vast majority (90+%) of Providence middle school students were not receiving the support they need to meet grade level expectations in math and language arts.

PVD Prep could prove a welcome addition to the portfolio of public schools in Providence while causing a relatively small enrollment and financial impact to the City of Providence. The proposed school would serve less than 1% of the district’s total enrollment and the total projected local share of the school’s per-pupil funding would, even at full scale, represent less than 2% of the district’s 2018-2019 expenditures. Additionally, the Council may wish to further understand how State intervention in the district will support expansion of high-potential charter school seats.

We encourage the Rhode Island Department of Education to offer its careful and favorable review of Providence Preparatory Charter School’s application for authorization. Please do not hesitate to contact me at kenneth_wong@brown.edu.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Wong

Kenneth Wong, Ph.D.

⁸ State of Rhode Island Schoolhouses, September 2017. Rhode Island Department of Elementary & Secondary Education, School Building Authority



Office of the Auditor General

State of Rhode Island - General Assembly
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December 2, 2020

Angélica Infante-Green, Commissioner
Rhode Island Department of Education
255 Westminster Street
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Commissioner Infante-Green:

I write regarding the charter school application to create the **Providence Preparatory Charter School**, an independent-type charter school. The Center for Dynamic Learning is the establishing entity for this charter school proposal.

While the charter school application is being considered for preliminary approval by the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education, the Auditor General is required, under section 16-77.3-2(b) of the RI General Laws to:

- Review the financial records of the establishing entity, the financial plan for operating the charter school, and the financial integrity of the organization submitting the charter school application; and
- Provide an initial determination that the nonprofit organization is financially responsible.

The Center for Dynamic Learning is a qualifying nonprofit establishing entity as provided in section 16-77.3-1 of the RI General Laws. We have reviewed the preliminary information supplied by The Center for Dynamic Learning and the primary contacts for the Providence Preparatory Charter School which included the Providence Preparatory Charter School application, preliminary budgets, and the establishing entity's Federal informational return (IRS Form 990 – Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax) for the year ended December 31, 2019. Audited financial statements were not available. Based on the information presented, we find the non-profit establishing entity to be financially responsible; although we note that, the charter will be held in the name of the Providence Preparatory Charter School.

Overall, we are supportive of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education granting preliminary approval to the Providence Preparatory Charter School. We emphasize that we have not considered or evaluated the educational plan proposed for the Providence Preparatory Charter School for its soundness from an educational perspective or for compliance with various federal and state educational requirements. We believe consideration of those requirements is appropriately within the purview of the RI Department of Education (RIDE) and its independent consultants engaged to review the application. However, should changes be proposed to the educational plan, corresponding modifications should be incorporated into a revised 5-year budget.

Additionally, we have not considered the potential financial impact on any local education agency which may send a student to the proposed Providence Preparatory Charter School.

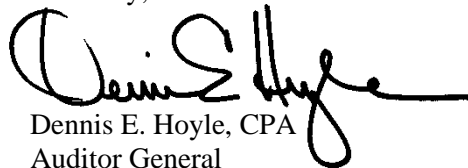
At this preliminary phase, we understand there are many variables which impact the financial plan of the proposed charter school. We highlight certain budget areas below to ensure they are addressed in subsequent updates to the five-year budget / financial plan prior to final charter approval:

December 2, 2020

- Update operating costs once a location has been formally secured reflecting rent, utilities, custodial, building maintenance, capital equipment, etc. and any required/anticipated capital improvements (operating costs are to be supported by a signed lease agreement).
- Align the two versions of the five-year operating budgets - the required RIDE budget template and a detailed budget by object code in accordance with the uniform chart of accounts (UCOA). There were several variances in the amounts budgeted for like items between the two budget formats which resulted in inconsistencies in the ending surplus/deficit amounts for each year between the two formats. A crosswalk should be provided to identify which UCOA object codes were combined to report in the RIDE budget template.
- Complete RIDE's Enrollment Estimates template to calculate the amount to budget for state and local funding.
- Describe how accounting and financial reporting requirements will be met without a Director of Operations and Finance in the first year of the School's operations.
- Update supporting documentation for any changes to significant budget line items and provide additional details for specific line-items, such as federal formula grants revenue and costs associated with pupil-use technology, hardware, and software, third party instructional services, employee healthcare and dental benefits, and food services. Also, specify which expenditures are to be funded with the Charter School Program (CSP) grant in year two of the grant.
- Provide a monthly cash flow budget for the first operating year that includes school start-up expenditures and related funding and operating expenses. The cash flow budget should demonstrate the school's ability to meet payroll and other obligations as they become due based on planned cash in-flows.

Please contact us should you have any questions regarding our review.

Sincerely,



Dennis E. Hoyle, CPA
Auditor General

c: Speaker Nicholas A. Mattiello
Senate President Dominick J. Ruggerio
Council on Elementary and Secondary Education
Stephen Osborn
Paula Barney
Jermaine Curtis
Toby Shepherd
Delia Rodriguez-Masjoan
Elizabeth Cunha